

Prevention Tips for Sore Muscles or Cramps

Do sore muscles and cramps discourage you from physical activity? Soreness and cramps are simply your muscles adjusting to new activity. Here are some tips to help fight muscle soreness and cramps:

- **Gradually** increase how often, how hard, and how long you are active.
- Wear appropriate and comfortable shoes and socks for physical activity.
- Drink plenty of water before, during, and after activity.
- Warm-up before and cool-down after each activity (see the handout on warm-up and cool-down).
- Pain relief creams (Bengay[®], Icy Hot[®]), ice, and/or heating pad can offer some relief.
- Do some gentle activity to keep the muscle moving. Doing no activity will make your soreness worse.
- If you're concerned, talk to your primary care provider.



If you do get a muscle cramp:

- Stretch the muscle and hold it until the cramp subsides.
 - Massage the cramp area.
 - If there is still pain, put ice on the cramped muscle for a few minutes.
 - Sometimes changing what you eat and drink can help.
 - Talk to your primary care provider.



If you have an injury that is affecting your ability to exercise, talk with your **MOVE!** healthcare team for guidance.

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